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The CHAIRMAN said that he was sure they would all participate in the sentiments which Mr. Petherick had so forcibly, succinctly, and ably expressed. Every geographer who had turned his attention to the subject of the discovery of the Sources of the Nile, well knew the difficulties that would attend the explorations of Captains Speke and Grant, when they arrived at the north end of Lake Nyanza, and in reaching those portions of the Nile to which no traveller of any nation had as yet ever penetrated. It was in order to render assistance to these gallant men in this the most difficult portion of their journey, where they would have to pass through a country inhabited by hostile and dangerous tribes, that Mr. Petherick had offered his services. He was willing to abandon his other occupations and to give up his time to meet his fellow-countrymen in this region of the interior. He had only to repeat the expression of his admiration of the proposal, and he did most earnestly hope that British geographers would, by their subscriptions, support this noble enterprise.

The Papers read were :—

1. *Journey to Fort Simpson, Queen Charlotte Islands.* By Captain R. W. TORRENS.

Communicated by the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, F.R.G.S., H. M. Secretary for the Colonies.

THE country through which the Nass River flows, like the whole north-west coast of British Columbia, is one long-continued formation of slate, with frequent veins of crystallized quartz. Immense mountains rise on either side, whose summits are covered with eternal snows, and under one of these our first camp upon the Nass was pitched.

From the third Indian village (8th day) upwards, the character of the country changes.

Evidences of volcanic action at some remote period are manifested in the blistered and discoloured appearance of the rocks ; frequent veins of decomposed quartz occur, and bars of slateic boulders, covered with a slimy vegetation, supersede the shifting gravel bars of the lower river.

The miners agreed in saying that the geological formation of this district was as auriferous in indications as any they had ever seen, and they were very sanguine of results.

At 110 miles from Fort Simpson we came to a point where the river takes a rectangular turn, falling at the rate of from 10 to 12 feet per mile. Its waters are hurled furiously through the cañon, forming below the angle a whirlpool some 300 feet in circumference. Upon its outer edge, and at intervals of a few moments, the waters boil up from beneath as from a cauldron, raising the level of the current several feet, and then bursting with a fury that carries everything before it.

By dint of hard labour, as well as watching our opportunity, we managed to reach a counter-current which brought us into safety. The miners affirmed that "Fraser River" has no danger equal to this, and thankful were we all when it had been overcome.

Beyond this point we proceeded for 3 miles, when we were brought to a standstill by a waterfall, over which our canoe could not be carried. We therefore determined to go back to one of our previous prospecting places, and there await the fall of the river.

The country through which we travelled claims no attraction for settlement, although patches of open lands occur upon the plateau that once formed the bed of the river—some 50, some 100 acres in extent—which will prove serviceable for the production of vegetables in the event of an immigration taking place thither. Eighty miles from the mouth of the river the Indians plant large crops of potatoes, and thereby a dépôt is formed, from which it would not be difficult to extend the cultivation of one of the greatest essentials in the economy of a mining camp.

In this northern latitude the climate is so severe as to render it doubtful whether cereals would mature. The transport of provisions might be made easy, for the trails throughout the country are already good.

It is not improbable, moreover, that the waters of the Nass may prove to be an easy and desirable medium of communication with the interior.

ABSTRACT OF JOURNAL.

Actual.	Running.	Distance.	Weather.	Date.	REMARKS.
1	1	30	fair	18 Sep.	Leave Fort Simpson with 3 of my original party and 2 Canadians (Alexander and Vautrin)—run 30 miles.
2	1	10	rain	19 "	Pass Observatory Inlet—Nass Straits about 12 miles broad. Camp 7 miles from entrance to river.
3	.	.	rain	20 "	Remain in camp—a regular deluge.
4	1	25	fair	21 "	9 A.M. enter Nass River—11 A.M. pass old Hudson Bay Company's Fort and Str. Anchorage—pass Shallows. Camp 2 miles below 1st Indian village.
5	1	12	fair	22 "	Pass 2nd Indian villages close to each other, above which tide rises for 3 miles. Stream gets strong—exchange paddles for poles—elevation of watershed of river becomes perceptible.
6	.	.	rain	23 "	Remain in camp.
7	1	8	rain	24 "	Elevation of watershed gradually increases—ditto strength of stream—gravel banks commence—prospect "colors" on bars.
8	1	10	fair	25 "	8 A.M. reach 3rd Indian village—river bifurcates—bad rapids—make portage—Indians kind—help to unload and reload—they wish us to remain—we decline—continue journey, camping 2 miles below 4th Indian village.
9	1	2	fair	26 "	At daybreak canoe comes from village from chiefs—they send to say they are glad of the arrival of the "white men"—they insist on our remaining 1 day in their camp—at 7 we arrive at village—the whole tribe turn out to meet us—they escort us to a house prepared for us. They then get wood and water for us, and make us presents of salmon and potatoes. They tell us of their old tradition. These Indians are the best we have seen.
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ABSTRACT OF JOURNAL—*continued.*

Actual.	Running.	Distance.	Weather.	Date.	REMARKS.
10	7 1	97 10	fair	27 Sep.	Start early—4 miles beyond village the river takes a sudden bend, as if returning towards coast, and half a mile farther resumes its original course as it debouches from a slatey cañon in which we discover quantities of decomposed quartz. This cañon is about 3 miles long—the transit is difficult—prospects 2 cents to "pan"—camp or bar between cañons—one mile of open.
11	1	6	fair	28 "	Enter 2nd cañon—day's work hard—have to climb over rocks to drag canoe along—fall of river from 8 to 10 feet per mile.
12	.	.	rain	29 "	Camp on tributary of Nass—prospect "colors" on the banks.
13	1	3	fair	30 "	Push on in hope of getting through cañon—pass a fearful whirlpool, and are stopped by waterfalls rendering passage by canoes impossible—land trails good. As we cannot proceed, we determine to wait fall of river upon some bar previously prospected—return to camp.
	10	116			
14	1	11	fair	1 Oct.	Return to 1st cañon to a place where outline of a large bar (under water) appears 20 feet from river—sink pits in gravel banks which prospect well—only 2 feet of bar out of water, prospects on which are good.
15	.	.	fair	2 "	Sunday—no work done—water falling.
16	.	.	fair	3 "	Prepare rocker and prospect. "Tchaik" Nass chief visits us—his men all armed—Indians glad to see white men—exchange presents.
17	.	.	rain	4 "	Rock 100 buckets—get about 1·00 dollars—rocker in bad order—our quicksilver is reported to be poor.
18	.	.	rain	5 "	Our Indians procure a light canoe and go up river with 2 of the party—we are most anxious to ascertain if cañon is broken above, feeling confident from the auriferous indications of the country that in an open district above rich prospects would be discovered.
19	.	.	snow	6 "	Snow and frost—copper proves useless—roast it to work out verdigris.
20	.	.	snow	7 "	Ditto wash 200 buckets—get about 2·50 dollars.
21	.	.	fair	8 "	Wash 400 buckets—get about 4·50 dollars. Our Indians return with light canoe. The party went 10 miles higher up than we did—5 miles by water, 5 by trail—prospecting wherever they could. They only took a pan with them—they saved 1 or 2 of their prospects—the gold in which seems somewhat larger than our bar. Could learn nothing as to length of cañon—they came to a new tribe of Indians speaking French after a fashion—these Indians were good.
22	1	35	fair	9 "	Start for Fort Simpson.
23	1	6	rain	10 "	Blowing half a gale of wind—start from our camp (1 mile below 1st Indian village), crossing the reach opposite Old Fort, took in a reef by doubling and lowering our sail—heavy seas—canoe half full of water—make for land opposite Old Fort.
24	.	.	rain	11 "	Heavy thunderstorm and gale.
25	.	.	rain	12 "	Drowned out—shift our camp.
26	.	.	fair	13 "	Wind dead ahead during the day, everything prepared for a start—at 11 P.M. wind changes—the moon being clear we start at 1 A.M. (14th) on our journey—blowing very fresh 5 A.M. (14th) a perfect deluge of rain sets in, and continues all day. At 6 P.M. reach Fort Simpson—report myself at Fort—am invited to become a guest—Captain McNeill's hospitality and kindness to myself and my party I shall never forget.
27	1	64	rain	14 "	
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The second Paper read was—

2. *Latest Explorations in British North America.* By Captain J. PALLISER, F.R.G.S., with Dr. HECTOR, and Mr. SULLIVAN.

[Captain Palliser's Paper will be published in the Journal.]

Dr. Hector to Sir Roderick I. Murchison.

Fort Vancouver, Dec. 18th, 1859.

DEAR SIR RODERICK,—I arrived too late at Fort Colville for any account of my explorations being communicated in Palliser's